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Academy Advocacy Report

May 5, 2020

NIBIB has received \$560 million to fund Covid-19 related research. All updated opportunities are being regularly disseminated to all Academy membership. On May 4th, NIBIB Director, Dr. Bruce Tromberg and program staff spent two hours on a Webex with 37 Academy early career investigators to answer questions about NIBIB initiatives, grant applications and being prepared to take advantage of the new funding opportunities. We will release a recording of this soon for all Academy member departments and societies to share. The Academy is creating additional opportunities to ensure our imaging investigators are well prepared for these funding opportunities.

Updates on other NIH IC's will also be forthcoming and shared.

Congressional action related to COVID-19 and funding to NIH

April 24: Congress passed “Paycheck Protection Program Health Care Enhancement Act ([H.R. 266](#), Phase 3.5). The bill provides \$484 billion in emergency aid to small businesses and hospitals, including:

- **\$25 billion -research, develop, validate, manufacture, purchase, administer, and expand capacity for COVID-19 testing, and includes \$1.8 billion for NIH:**
 - **\$500 million for the National Institute of Biomedical Imaging and Bioengineering**
 - \$306 million for the National Cancer Institute,
 - \$1 billion to the Office of the Director, including to support public-private partnerships.

Congress continues to debate the potential need for a 4th Covid-19 stimulus package, but significant differences remain between the Senate and the House. It is unlikely this will be considered until late May or June.

There are two efforts right now that are important to note for our membership:

1. A collective advocacy community effort to secure **\$31 billion in additional emergency supplemental investments in the NIH**. This is SEPARATE from the current Covid-19 funds and SEPARATE from the annual appropriation.
 - a. Opportunities to fund additional Covid-19 research related activities
 - b. Near-term response to support ramping up of NIH-supported research activities and preserve the momentum of the nation’s investment in biomedical research
 - c. Long term investments to rebuild the biomedical research enterprise; and
 - d. Enabling continuation of robust and necessary investments through regular appropriations

2. A Congressional & Senate effort to secure **\$26 billion in bridge funding for researchers** to cover supplements for research grants and contracts, provide emergency relief to sustain research support personnel and base operating costs for core research facilities and fund additional graduate student and postdoc fellowships, traineeships and research assistantships:
 - 1) *cover research grant and contract supplements (“cost extensions”) due to covid19 impacts,*
 - 2) *for emergency relief to sustain research support personnel and base operating costs for core research facilities and user-funded research services,*
 - 3) *to fund additional graduate student and postdoc fellowships, traineeships, and research assistantships for up to two years, based on assumption of 4 months of closure, among other issues across the US research enterprise.*

March 27: Congress passed the Coronavirus, Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act (the 3rd Package) in which it provided the National Institute of Health with special emergency funding to specifically address prevent, prepare for and response to the covid19 pandemic. The funding was specified as follows and remains available until September 30, 2024, an unusual multiyear provision.

- National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) – \$706,000,000
 - *156,000,000 of this total is designated for facility needs for vaccine research
- National Heart Lung Blood Institute (NHLBI) – \$103,400,000
- **National Institute of Biomedical Imaging and Bioengineering (NIBIB) – \$60,000,000**
- National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences (NCATS) – \$36,000,000
- National Library of Medicine (NLM) – \$10,000,000
- Office of the Director/Common Fund – \$30,000,000

Annual Congressional Appropriations

- House and Senate are moving forward on appropriations bills, including **Labor/HHS (which funds NIH)**, with the hope of the House voting each bill out by late July and

the Senate before August recess, to reach the goal of being signed into law by 9/30.

- It is more likely that the bills will not be voted out by August, and Congress will need to reach agreement on a continuing resolution to keep the government funded beyond the end of FY to after the election but could be into next year. Known challenges to the schedule include:
 - Lost time on calendar due to lockdown - House returns May 11th and the Senate returns May 4th. Also, major issues over allowing verbal or virtual voting.
 - Bipartisan Budget Act of 2019 (BBA) provides little room for increases for discretionary funding for FY2021. These caps will need to be raised for any increases for the Labor HHS bill, for example.
 - House and Senate Appropriations leaders are interested in raising the caps which is good news
 - Appropriators would like to negotiate “exempting” programs that relate to the Covid-19 response from the budget totals to all flexibility in funding for the response without cutting discretionary funding to other critical programs such as NIH and other federal agencies that are receiving covid-19.
- We are engaged with our coalition partners to pursue critical relief to cover costs and shore up programs for biomedical research programs in the stimulus packages.
- We have been and continue to be actively advocating Senate and House offices both in person and virtually for the need to increase funding to NIH (\$3bil) and to NIBIB (\$25mil) in FY21 (ongoing activity, requesting their support of these increases and raising awareness of the impact on imaging research that is in their state or district.
- The Academy submitted Academy written testimony to the House and Senate appropriations committee outlining our advocacy priorities and needs while providing our FY21 funding asks for NIH and NIBIB.
- The Academy approached over 70 House and Senate offices for submission of our committee report language on NIBIB data repository efforts for the FY21 LHHS appropriations bill.

*To receive more Academy updates please email Casey Cappelletti,
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